UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.: GENERAL

E/ECA/CM.17/17
5 March 1991

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twelfth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
29 April to 7 May 1991

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twenty-sixth session of the Commission/ seventeenth meeting of the Conference of Ministers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
9 to 13 May 1991

THE STATUS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA IN THE 1980s AND PROSPECTS FOR THE 1990s: MODALITIES OF POLICY CO-ORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION BY SOCIAL SECTOR INSTITUTIONS

M91-300

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. The African continent in the 1980s was characterized by a deep and continuous socio-economic crisis of unprecedented dimensions. Thus, the impressive achievements of the post independent Africa of the 1960s and part of the 1970s were either lost or seriously eroded during the decade of the 1980s. The dramatic decline in practically all facets of Africa's socio-economic development scene was the consequence of a dynamic interplay of internal and external factors. On the endogenous side there was, for example, persistent and severe natural disasters, compounded by civil wars and the various types of political instability. The situation was further exacerbated by perennial structural imbalances and weaknesses and domestic policy failures, evidenced, among other factors, by failure to address the pressing question of continuously declining agricultural production, and unprecedented population growth rates. On the exogenous side, global recession and adverse terms of trade, among other factors, have heightened the economic dependency of the continent on an inhospitable world economic system. The chronic balance-of-payments crisis and the worsening external debt problems are expressions of that dependency reality. In the last few decades, for instance, agricultural exports have declined sharply by more than 3 per cent a year. As a result, the share of African exports in all world trade fell from 2.4 per cent in 1970 to 1.7 per cent in 1985. Despite the rapid rise in oil prices by 25 per cent in 1989, the fall in export prices for non-fuel commodities had devastating effects on the economies of a number of countries. In the face of declining commodity prices, many African countries resorted to heavy external borrowing to sustain levels of expenditures made possible by earlier booms. Sub-Saharan Africa's debt has grown faster than that of other developing regions.

2. Even though there was a modest upturn in the African economy in 1989, the general trend was a continuous and persistent decline in economic activity and a negative growth in GNP between 1980-1987. Moreover, sub-Saharan African countries have now witnessed almost a decade of falling per capita incomes. The constraints on production, coupled with misguided economic policies, have resulted in continuing food crisis and diminishing self-sufficiency ratios, which have caused miseries to millions of African people. The consequences of food shortages have meant an increasing dependence on food aid and rising food imports. In 1986, one out of every five Africans depended on his/her survival on food aid.

3. The intensification of the African socio-economic crisis in the 1980s called for some forms of adjustment and recovery measures in most African countries. Thus, by 1987, almost 60 per cent of all countries in Africa were implementing conventional structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These programmes in turn have had catastrophic effects on the African social sector because of their preoccupation with, for instance, balance-of-payments equilibrium. Consequently, such critical areas of social development as health, education, employment, food and nutrition, among others, declined precipitously as the governments were forced to drastically cut expenditures on a sector so vital to sustained growth and development and long-term structural transformation. The main objective of this report is, therefore, to discern the salient features of 1980s crisis on Africa's social development scene and to reflect on the possible perspectives and prospects for the 1990s. Towards this end, the report is divided into two major parts as follows: Part one briefly reviews the inter-related issues of population, education, health and nutrition, employment, income and poverty vulnerable social groups in society and finally, the structure and function of the African family. Part two is concerned with perspectives for the 1990s, modalities for policy co-ordination and

policy implementation by social sector institutions. This part also offers some recommendations and summaries and concludes the report.

I. POPULATION DYNAMICS

4. In recent years, the rate of African population increase has been greater than in any other world region. This increase primarily results from the accelerated growth rates in Eastern and West Africa and which are expected to reach a peak of 3.1 and 3.3 per cent in the 1990s, respectively. The population of Central Africa is also contributing significantly to this high growth rate which shows an increase from 1.9 per cent in the first half of the 1980s to 2.9 per cent in the period between 1985-1990. With an overall growth rate of 3.01 per cent in the 1990s, Africa's total population is expected to double in about 23 years.

5. The distribution of different age groups in a population determines the dependency ratio, i.e., the extent of the burden on people of working age to support the very young and the very old. African countries have the highest dependency burden, with almost 50 per cent of the population being below 15 years. Despite fluctuations between the regions, the African child population, aged 0-14 years, constitutes about 44 per cent of the total population. Although the number of children has been increasing steadily in Africa, their proportion to the total population has been declining since 1970 following changes in fertility. In Africa, the youth population represented 19.1 per cent of the population in 1980. This percentage declined to 19.0 per cent in 1990 and is expected to rise again to 19.5 per cent in the year 2000. According to World Population Prospects, aging is not an immediate concern in Africa. The elderly population comprised 3.2 per cent in 1990 and is expected to reach 3.3 per cent in 2000. An inevitable concomitant of a heavily youthful population (dependency burden) is the fact that it exerts undue pressure on already limited and overstretched infrastructural facilities, especially education, health and housing.

6. Life expectancy is very low in Africa. Four countries still have a life expectancy of less than 45 years. Only 20 African states have achieved a life expectancy of between 50 and 60 years, and only 11 countries reached figures above 60 years. Moreover, the highest infant mortality rate for 1980-1985 among the major areas of the world were, for instance, 116 per 1,000 births for Africa and 83 for Asia. However, there are slight subregional variations in Africa. The North and Southern African regions have already achieved more in improving life expectancy and reducing infant mortality rates.

7. Eighteen per cent of the African population lived in an urban place in 1985, whereas for the other least developed countries, it was 16 per cent. All three of the least developed countries, with more than half of their population living in an urban place, were in Africa: Cape Verde, Djibouti, and Guinea. Since 1975, Africa has experienced the fastest rate of urbanization in the world. From 1975 to 1985, the African urban population increased by more than 70 per cent. The urban African population is growing at 5 per cent, the highest in the world. Despite variations between regions, there is an observed rapid increase in the proportion of urban population, from less than 32 per cent in 1985 to more than 40 per cent by the year 2000. In North Africa and Southern Africa, it is expected to reach almost half and more than half of the total population respectively. This observed increase is primarily due to high levels of rural-to-urban migration.

II. THE STATUS OF EDUCATION AND LITERACY

8. A great deal of effort went into the development of formal and non-formal education during the first decade and a half of post-independent Africa. Heavy overall investments in physical, human terms and financial resources were allocated to the sector. Unfortunately, the ensuing benefits have not been commensurate with the enormous cost incurred. Moreover, weaknesses from the colonial educational policy and their persistence during the first two decades of independence have strongly left their imprints on the status of education and the African States' attempts at reform and expansion in the 1980s. These circumstances prepared the ground for rapid deceleration and deterioration in the educational system in the last decade.

9. As a result of demographic pressures, and the consequent increase in the school-age population, the annual growth in the total number of students fell from 8.1 per cent in 1970-1980 to 3.9 per cent in 1980-1987. The decline was sharpest at the primary level where the annual growth rate plunged from 7.3 to 2.6 per cent in the same period. The corresponding figures for the secondary level were from 11.9 to 8.5 per cent, and for the university level from 13.1 to 7.7 per cent. There was also a steeper decline in the growth of primary schools, for which the population pressure was greatest, than in secondary and university institutions.

10. Non-formal education and literacy programmes in the 1980s have not grown fast enough to compensate for the shortfalls in the formal educational system. Thus, although literacy ratio rose in the last decade, the number of illiterates continues to grow as parents keep their children out of school due to poverty, while those who enrol but are not able to stay long enough to acquire permanent literacy, add to the pool. Available evidence suggests, e.g., that the incidence of adult literacy is highest in Africa (with a ratio as high as 60 per cent). The percentage of literates was highest in Eastern and Southern Africa, followed by Central Africa and lowest in West Africa. Of course, again the ratio was higher for males than for females, with West Africa and North Africa showing the lowest percentages.

11. The decade of the 1980s witnessed a sharp decline in regional per capita expenditure on education, from $US 41 in 1980 to $US 15 in 1988. The most severe cuts were made in capital expenditures and recurrent expenditures for supplies, furniture, equipment for science laboratories and for repair and maintenance. Rehabilitation of decaying educational institutions became prohibitive for many countries. Moreover, public expenditure for all levels is disproportionately skewed in favour of higher education. However, the surge in unit costs did not seem to be accompanied by a marked improvement in the quality of education. Thus, the contribution which education is expected to make to Africa's recovery and socio-economic development is limited by poor infrastructure, resources and teacher training, and the threat of human wastage through non-attendance of school, particularly at the primary level, and among the poor and vulnerable social groups and increased drop-out rates, especially among girls, who had the highest attrition rates in primary school.

12. In addition, unequal access to education and the educational system have become a source of social and political conflicts. At all levels, children from poorer families are at a significant disadvantage in respect of access to the better quality schools in comparison to children from rich backgrounds, and children in the rural areas, who are faced with similar disadvantages, when compared to those in the urban areas, even with respect to State-financed schools. Country's regional disparities regarding access to educational opportunities are quite remarkable in some countries, particularly when coupled with ethnic and/or religious biases.

III. HEALTH AND NUTRITION

13. The available data on the health situation in Africa in the 1980s indicate critical health threats to the African population. The family is the primary producer of health, particularly the mother. Critical to the mother's ability to produce healthy surviving children is, among other things, her own physical condition. In 12 of 24 countries for which data are available, the maternal mortality rate is well above 500 per 100,000 live births, compared with 44 in China and 90 in Sri Lanka. In 1987, maternal mortality rate was 1,000 in Ghana and over 1,000 in Somalia. Each year about 150,000 mothers in Africa die and the same number suffer permanent disabilities because of complications consequent to pregnancy and childbirth.

14. The conditions of children regarding health also deteriorated significantly during the 1980s. Available data on infant mortality rate (IMR) clearly show that IMR remains much higher than anywhere else in the world. In 1988, for instance, out of 34 countries in the developing world with IMR greater than 100 per 1,000 live births, 22 were in the African region. Thus, although there was some reduction in the IMR between 1960-1988, the IMR in 20 of them in 1988 was very high, ranging between 171 and 116 per 1,000 live births. In 1988, 20 out of the 30 countries in the world with the highest under-5 mortality rate (U5MR) of over 170 per 1,000 live births were found in Africa. Despite the decline in the U5MR between 1960-1988, in 1988, 38 African countries had U5MR of between 107 and 300 per 1,000 live births. The deterioration in the health status of the African population in the 1980s, was further exacerbated by the drastic cuts, unavailable resources and funding experienced by the health sector in many African countries. Health expenditures for example, as percentage of GNP, declined in seven countries, stagnated in one, and increased in seven countries. However, for the region as a whole, the share of health in recurrent government expenditures, which stood at 25.2 per cent in 1986, declined to 23.1 per cent in 1987 and fell further to 19 per cent in 1988.

15. The global spread of AIDS and HIV infection, as a challenge to public health, has complicated the already precarious health status of the African population. As at 31 December 1988, a total of 32,480 cases of AIDS had been reported from 42 African countries, of which 18,635 cases were reported during 1988. These data, however, do not represent a complete picture of the incidence and prevalence of the disease because, for instance, during the whole of 1989, only 5,523 cases were reported.

16. The implications of AIDS, in terms of human suffering, cost to health services and social impact, are enormous. Thus, the AIDS pandemic is a major health challenge to Africa in the 1990s, and has the potential to affect many areas of social policy. AIDS also poses a threat to the impact of HIV and AIDS in young people and infants and might cause a decline in national life expectancies in many countries and raise IMR; thus, some gains in reducing fertility might be reversed. In terms of social and economic cost, when large numbers of productive members of society are affected - approximately 75 to 90 per cent of cases are among young people aged between 20 to 40 years - AIDS deprives society of its economic and social contributions. The family structure and function are threatened both by infection and by loss of mothers and fathers. Their illness and death mean loss of productivity, human capital and support for the children and the elderly. Moreover, their care depletes already scarce resources of both families and health-care structures. However, while international medical and health efforts are central to the struggle against this epidemic, until research yields results, prevention remains at present the only effective weapon. Education programmes and public information are indispensable and remain the only instruments at this stage to combat HIV and AIDS epidemic.

17. The food crisis in Africa, together with the droughts and famines of the 1980s, had a tremendous impact on the status of nutrition in the region. The nutritional status of any country is the function of both food availability and food accessibility. Thus, the nutritional insecurity in Africa is not simply a question of food scarcity in aggregate terms. Daily calorie supply per capita declined in 10 of the 16 countries on which information are complete between 1980-1986. Moreover, the proportion of household income spent on all food and cereals declined considerably between 1980-1985 in 14 countries for which data are available. Dietary deficiencies have tended to be particularly serious among children and among the rural population.

IV. EMPLOYMENT, INCOME AND POVERTY

A. Employment

18. All the literature on employment in the African region has reported a tremendous deterioration in the employment situation during the 1980s. The sharply deteriorating trend in productive employment is demonstrated by the falling refined activity rates for all the subregions from 1981-1987. Available data show that, despite a slight increase in total employment in the 1970s, it stagnated in the 1980s and the overall employment situation worsened by some 16, per cent between 1980 AND 1987. Despite the central position of agriculture in the African economies and societies (it occupies about two-thirds of the labour force and 80 per cent of the working women), the employment situation in agriculture witnessed a serious decline during the second half of the 1980s. There is a heavy concentration of the active population in agriculture except for North Africa which exhibits a higher degree of sectoral differentiation. However, the decline observed in agricultural employment opportunities should be linked with suspected high rates of underemployment, especially in subsistence agriculture where productivity is low. All these have made the rural areas the fountainhead of Africa's employment problem.

19. Given the fact that agriculture constitutes the largest sector of the economies of the least developed countries (LDCs), both in terms of number employed in the sector and its absolute share in GDP, the performance of the agriculture sector in the African LDCs, regarding labour absorption, is even more distressing. For the 28 African LDCs, as a group, the growth rate of agricultural GDP declined from 0.87 per cent in the 1970s to a mere 0.42 per cent during 1980-1987. The productivity of agriculture and the expansion of employment opportunities in rural areas are found to become increasingly constrained by population pressure, degradation of the eco-system, the limited spread of technology, institutional constraints and misguided government policies.

20. Available information indicated that only a small fraction of the new workers who enter the labour market each year will be able to find employment in the modern sector, even under the most optimistic scenarios. Modern sector wage employment represented 10 per cent of the regional labour force in 1985. Moreover, wage employment growth in the modern sector has decreased considerably in a number of African countries since 1980. Thus, in 13 countries for which data are available, the average rate of increase slowed down from 2.8 per cent per annum in the period 1975-1980 to 1.1 per cent between 1980 and 1985. Five countries have even shown a decline in wage employment (Swaziland, Zambia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia and the Niger) and only two (Botswana and Zimbabwe) have shown a negligible increase between 1980-1985; moreover, nine countries registered an outright decrease in the industrial wage employment opportunities. Thus, a deceleration in modern sector wage employment has been reported in the majority of the African countries.

21. The retrenchment of workers and civil service employees added to the already precarious situation by rendering millions of people unemployed in the period 1985-1987. Industry has not been reoriented to labour-intensive strategies to absorb more of the rapidly expanding work force. Thus, employment growth in the industrial sector decelerated from 2.4 per cent in 1975-1980 to a mere 0.1 per cent in 1980-1985. The failure of the manufacturing industry to absorb the growing urban labour force is more pronounced in the African LDCs. Data collected from a sample of eight LDCs indicate that employment growth has been seriously lagging behind growth in industrial output expansion except in Botswana. The rate of labour absorption in the manufacturing sector fell behind the urban population growth rate in Benin, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Malawi. In addition, the growth in manufacturing value added exceeded the growth rate of total population in Botswana, Burkina Faso and Ethiopia. In five countries (Benin, the Gambia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Malawi and Somalia), population growth outstripped the growth rate of manufacturing output. Industrial output expansion and employment creation have not been commensurate with the preponderance of resources allocated to it.

22. The employment situation in both the modern wage employment and agriculture have created undeniable unemployment problems in the region, especially in urban areas. The available information about urban unemployment in the region by the end of the 1980s suggests that its rate ranged between 15-20 per cent, up from approximately 10 per cent in the mid-1970s. This means that, in absolute terms, there are approximately 9 million urban unemployed in sub-Saharan Africa. This number is growing at the exceedingly high tempo. It is currently estimated that the unemployed population is growing at 10 per cent or more a year, compared to an estimate of 6 per cent a year for the 1960s. The social profile of the unemployed reveals two important characteristics, namely their youthfulness and their high level of education.

23. Stagnant, and the very slowly rising modern sector employment, together with the social nature of the unemployed, have left small and micro-enterprises, now mainly in the informal sector, to absorb about half of the new entrants to the labour force. An estimated 61 per cent of the urban labour force are currently employed in the informal sector.

B. Incomes

24. The observed decline in economic activity in the 1980s was reflected in the steady declines in per capita income experienced by African countries as a whole. Per capita income declined at annual average rate of 3.4 per cent in the period 1980-1986. The drastic decline in aggregate African income levels in the mid-1980s has worsened the situation of income disparities between the various socio-economic groups. One estimate shows that, on average, the ratio of urban to rural incomes is 4:1, and the gap is continuously widening. However, it is important to note that geographic income groups are not homogenous. In other words, rural areas may comprise some rich large commercial farmers, white urban areas are populated by poor, unskilled marginal workers with very low incomes. Given the drastic decline in per capita income which has dramatically increased income competition among socio-economic groups, income disparities in the region can now be considered among the highest in the world. The available albeit fragmented information on the distribution of income in seven African countries indicates that in some of them, the top 20 per cent of the socio-economic groups appropriated between 55 and 61 per cent of the total income while the bottom 40 per cent earned between 9 and 12 per cent in the mid-1980s.

25. A consideration relevant to the structure of income distribution is the sharp fall observed in real wages and its impact on low income earners. This is particularly important when the African labour force depends on wage employment as a major source of cash income. A World Bank study on sub-Saharan African countries shows that only one country reported a modest increase in real wages. All the other countries registered considerable declines. Real wages declined more rapidly than per capita income and had an average fall of 30 per cent between 1980-1986. The declines were particularly severe in LDCs undertaking conventional SAPs (e.g., the Sudan, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Gambia). This has caused a dramatic loss in the purchasing power of the wage workers earnings and its impact was greatest on the lowest paid who could barely meet their food needs.

C. The incidence of poverty

26. In view of rising unemployment, decline in per capita incomes and real wages, the incidence and prevalence of poverty have increased in Africa. Notwithstanding the conceptual controversy over poverty, the poor being defined as those who live below the poverty line, i.e., that level of income below which an individual or household cannot afford, on regular basis, the necessities of life. Although there was an observed drop in the proportion of Africans living below the poverty line in urban areas from 32 to 29 per cent between 1975 and 1985, the number of people living in poverty increased substantially from 26 to 47 million during this period, because the urban population itself grew rapidly. On the other hand, there was a rapid growth of rural poverty during the same period from 50 to 58 per cent. Recent data on the proportion of the population below the poverty line in 23 African countries reveal even more starkly the incidence of rural poverty. Thus, in more than half of these countries (12), the proportion of rural population below the poverty line ranges between 6 and 91 per cent. It is important to note that the rural poor are a heterogeneous group comprising the landless, nomads and pastoralists, and fishermen, but they share common disabilities. These include limited assets, environmentally vulnerable, lack of access to public services and amenities, especially education and medical care.

V. VULNERABLE SOCIAL GROUPS IN THE SOCIETY

27. The above cursory review of the social development record in Africa during the 1960s, distressing as it is, indicates that in addition, the distribution of the slender resources among the various socio-economic groupings is transparently unequal. This has disastrous effects on the social development scene in Africa. Thus, the socio-economic and political process in the region has relegated certain groups to vulnerable situations, poverty and perennial social deprivations. And yet, many African Governments have, in different fora, stated their recognition that sustained development and long-term structural transformation in the continent would be impossible without the full integration of these groups into all development efforts. As is usually the case, there has been a continuous discrepancy between stated policies and actual practice. The following section examines, albeit briefly, the implications of marginalizing a large segment of the population - here defined as vulnerable groups - from the mainstream of development strategies.

A. Women and social development

28. Women in general are subjected to two major constraints which greatly affected their general social status in the society: (a) cultural and ideological biases reinforced by traditional institutions and social customs and (b) formal and legal barriers which stand in the way of women's

emancipation. These two constraints prevent women from becoming fully active participants in the cultural, social, economic and political life of their respective countries. Studies in social development must take into account the plight of women belonging to different socio-cultural groups and classes in each country.

29. Equal access to education for women is a crucial factor for the achievement of their full participation in the process of development. However, although the proportion of girls, aged 6 to 11 years enrolled in schools in the 1980s increased to 57 per cent, the number of girls not enrolled in school remains significantly greater than the number of boys. ILO data show that there is a wide variation in gross enrolment ratios from Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Kenya with ratios of 127, 126 and 93 respectively, to Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Chad, with ratios 17, 18, 24, 28 and 29, respectively, in 1986-1988. However, female enrolment ratios are generally lower than those of males even in countries with high total gross enrolment ratios.

30. The gender gap in education comes at a high social and economic cost to any country. Evidence shows that the mother's education is perhaps the single most important determinant of a family's health and nutrition, and that education enhances agricultural productivity. Thus, since most agricultural subsistence producers are women, basic education can be expected to improve their income opportunities and decision-making powers within the household. Furthermore, even a few years of learning at the primary school has been shown to lower women's fertility either directly by increasing awareness of contraception, or indirectly, by reducing the demand for children, because women perceive enhanced earnings as important, or by raising the age of marriage and thereby reducing the number of child-bearing years.

31. The poor and unsatisfactory health status of the African population in the 1980s has already been pointed out. Women are subjected to more health problems than men, they have less access to curative and preventive health services. Health services, especially in the rural areas of Africa, are weak for both men and women, but women's general lack of mobility, as opposed to men, further limits their ability to travel to service points (for immunization, for example). Thus, pressures on women's time have an adverse effect on the efficiency of health care. In Africa, for instance, more girls than boys die between the ages of one and four years, a stark contrast with the industrial countries where deaths of boys are more than 20 per cent higher than those of girls. This is indicative of the socio-cultural patterns that discriminate against women. This discrimination takes different forms. We have already, for instance, pointed to the high maternal mortality rate, which again indicates that women may not get the same health care and nutrition as men.

32. Increasing participation of women has been recognized by all African States, despite the underestimation of women's economic contribution in the household, and in the subsistence economy as unpaid family workers. Labour force participation rates are higher for males than for females, except for the age bracket 15-19 because of higher male enrolment in secondary school. The gender bias differs according to the location. In rural areas, the activity rate is higher for females, while the opposite is true in urban areas. However, female wage employment seems to have increased steadily over the past few years. Information based on a sample of nine countries shows that the proportion of women in total wage employment has gone up from 15.8 per cenmt in 1975 to 17.9 and 19.1 per cent in 1980 and 1985 respectively. However, it should be noted that the relative increase (1.2 per cent) was smaller in 1980-1985 than that in 1975-1980 (2.1 per cent). This suggests that women's access to wage employment - although improving over time - was threatened by the economic crisis of the 1980s.

33. Despite these changes, more than two-thirds of African women are still employed in agriculture. However, women carry the considerable disadvantage, faced by the rural population, as well as overburdened with a considerable workload. Women act as mothers, cultivators, food providers, and in animal breeding, water fetching, etc. In many cases, women are landless. Because of frequent excessive workloads, women lack opportunity to fully participate in social gatherings that are dominated by male heads of household. As a consequence, women are exposed to unfair exploitation which reflects long hours of work, with extremely low level of income. The lower pay of women compared to men is also related to the concentration of women in low-paying labour-intensive industries. Moreover, women seldom occupy jobs at the management or decision-making levels or in skilled manual work, which is an important reason why, on average, they earn less than men. These prohibitive conditions have placed women, economically and socially, dependent on the male heads of households.

B. Refugees and displaced persons

34. The number of people fleeing persecution (for reasons of race, religion, ethnic origin or political belief), internal conflicts, civil wars, natural disasters and the collapse of the rural economy in different parts of Africa significantly increased in the 1980s. In 1989, 6 million of the estimated 14 million refugees were in Africa, and the Horn of Africa accounted for at least 2 million of them. The refugee problem has become one of the major forces countering the social and economic development of Africa, particularly in the rural areas. Thus, besides the human hardship this problem imposes upon those involved (the refugees and home countries) severe problems of depopulation, reduced productive capacity, and threatened food shortages that may encourage further population migration. Furthermore, the burden on host countries to provide food, shelter, clothing, health care, education and gainful employment is typically beyond individual country's capability.

35. The problems faced by refugees in their new and often hostile environment frequently cannot be ignored particularly those pertaining to the status of social development among them daunting with definite implications for social development in general. The refugee population is usually young and includes a high proportion of school-age children. In Somalia, for instance, children under five years constituted 60 per cent of the refugee population in 1987. However, the proportion of those enrolled in school is indeed very small. In the Sudan, for example, only 28.9 per cent of the Ethiopian refugees in the Eastern region went to school in 1988. Despite the establishment of primary schools in refugee camps, in most host countries the shortage of teaching materials, trained teachers, and overcrowdness of schools have led to high rates of dropouts. The refugees are exposed to serious health hazards especially upon their arrival when dehydration, malnutrition, swollen legs and feet are visible signs in the refugee reception centres. A mission of the OAU Commission of Fifteen on Refugees in five African countries observed the prevalence of anemia and scurvy in many refugee camps, with anemia particularly affecting pregnant/lactating women and small children. Diarrhoea was also cited as being responsible for many deaths in refugee camps and there was also a high incidence of relapsing fever and malnutrition within the settlements. Pneumonia also posed a serious health hazard. Shortages of drugs was cited by the national staff in the respective refugee camps as a serious problem which limits disease-control programmes. Malnutrition cases were attributed to inadequate food supply, both in terms of quantity and quality.

36. African refugees ironically cross the borders into poor countries already beset by rising rates of unemployment among their nationals. Thus, the prospects of refugee absorption in gainful

employment are usually precarious. One serious problem faced by refugees, especially in rural areas of the host countries, is the necessary adaptation to new employment patterns. Ethiopian refugees in rural Sudan, for instance, revealed that the overwhelming majority (78.5 per cent) used to practice farming and animal husbandry in their respective home areas. However, the present forms of refugee employment have radically changed the previous employment patterns, where they are now dependent on wage labour either in mechanized agricultural schemes or in nearby towns. The unemployment rate among them is as high as 41.2 per cent. Moreover, restrictions on the refugee movement continue to be a major constraint in their access to alternative employment opportunities.

37. Internal wars, famines, droughts and environmental disasters triggered a mass displacement of population and large-scale migratory movements within African States during the 1980s. The numbers of displaced persons are more difficult to estimate, since they stay within their national boundaries but there may be as many as 10 million in the region whose plight is still unresolved.

C. Youth

38. The youth population is the largest in Africa, representing 11 per cent of the world youth population in 1984. Moreover, they represent between 19 and 25 per cent of the total population in many countries. Although the majority of young people live in rural areas, their rate of migration to large urban centres is growing steadily. The main source of alarm is not the size of the youth population, but the fact that they represent an inadequately tapped reservoir of human resources. Although young people have traditionally encountered problems in the areas of education and training, family life, health and housing, unemployment, according to the United Nations Secretary-General "is the most critical socio-economic problem relating to youth". Youth are bearing a disproportionate share of the employment problem. Thus, typically the youth population accounts for between 60 and 75 per cent of the unemployed population in the region. Information obtained on 15 sub-Saharan African countries reveal that youth unemployment rate is, on average, higher than the adult unemployment rate. Moreover, the majority of those employed are holding jobs which offer little in the way of satisfying and rewarding experience.

39. Another important characteristic of the unemployed youth is their high level of education. Available data suggest that educated youth in Africa are becoming more prone to unemployment than the uneducated work force. Though data on employment, by age and educational attainment, is lacking, the available information support the proposition that educated youth are not immune to unemployment, and that they often bear a disproportionate burden of the youth unemployment problem. Evidence also shows that the unemployment rate among those who completed secondary education is higher than those who had completed the primary school.

VI. THE IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS ON THE FAMILY

40. The structure of the African family has remained relatively stable. However, there is an observed trend towards breakdown in the traditional structure and support function of the family, particularly in urban centres, and in rural areas mostly affected by the continuing economic crisis, war, drought and the attendant processes of displacement and migration. In many parts of Africa, prolonged and recurrent devastation of nature, exacerbated by war and serious economic decline, have led to the disintegration of families. As families are important producers of food in Africa, the breakdown of the family threatens the survival of individuals and the economic viability of the

communities in rural areas. The cutbacks in social services, due to severe fiscal pressures, have reduced financial security for the population at the very time when it is most needed. The social functions of the family have also been found to break down under these extreme pressures. Under normal conditions, the extended family, and other kin-based groups, would have provided assistance and a buffer against such economic set-backs. However, such traditional arrangements are no longer as viable when these families are fleeing droughts, wars and starvation, and as their own resources have become so limited. Thus, children were abandoned by parents who could no longer support them. The migration of whole families and households in search of relief from starvation, in areas of extreme deprivation, has uprooted families and communities and disrupted the existing system of production and services for members of these social groups.

41. Structural adjustment programmes have had a negative social impact on the status of the African family and have created a dilemma and a vicious circle. Where some measure of economic growth has been achieved, countries have become more indebted and dependent on external financial resources and less capable of delivering to the people the social benefits assumed to be derived from growth. Thus, there has been a distinct shift of the financial burden of important basic needs from the public to the private domain and to families, whether they could afford it or not. Structural adjustment programmes have their greatest adverse effect on the African family's security and well-being, due to elimination of subsidies, the wage freeze and decline and the subsequent decline in migrants' remittances from urban to rural areas.

PART TWO

VII. PERSPECTIVES FOR THE 1990s

42. The discussion of prospects for social development in the 1990s is highlighted and measured against the background of the persistent African crisis and the unsatisfactory performance of African States regarding the implementation of recovery and development programmes. Thus, social issues and concerns emanating from the experience of the 1980s are shown to be the major challenges to social policy and the status of social development in the 1990s.

43. Unregulated population growth, which will reach its peak in the mid-1990s, is not commensurate with the pattern of utilization of resources and will continue, in the 1990s, to strain the capacity of social services throughout the African continent. It will impose a burden, with disastrous effects, on individual households, state savings, and will weaken national efforts to improve the quality of life and exacerbate the problem of declining per capita incomes and health expenditures. Despite projected decline in both population annual growth rate and total fertility rate between 1990-2020, the African population will exceed 1 billion by 2020. Considering the inadequacy of family planning programmes in most African countries, it is unlikely that fertility reduction, assumed in standard projections, will occur. The observed uneven age distribution of the African population will persist during the 1990s and will have serious implications for social development. Among other things, the burden it places on working people is not only great but limits their capacity to make productive investments.

44. Movements of migrants and displaced populations to large urban centres is expected to grow in the 1990s and will lead to deepening of the urban crisis. The failure to produce and manage urban infrastructures, services and shelter will result in mushrooming shanty settlements, with primitive facilities and rampant disease linked to unhealthy environment.

45. Given the enrolment trends of the 1980s and owing to rapid population growth, universal primary education, in the majority of the African countries, will not be attained by the turn of the century. However, the challenge of the 1990s in this respect will not simply be the stagnation of enrolment but also the low and declining quality of education. The problem would further be aggravated if the present share of education in public expenditures were maintained during the 1990s. This is closely related to the disproportionate and skewed public expenditures in favour of higher education. The question of equality in access to education at all levels will come to the fore of the educational issues in the 1990s. Children from poorer socio-economic backgrounds and marginalized regions are at a significant disadvantage, being admitted to low standard schools manned by inadequately prepared and poorly remunerated teachers. Thus, the question of subsidizing rich and urban children at the expense of poor and rural children will be articulated in the ensuing socio-political conflict over educational opportunities. The skewed distribution of these opportunities might be a cause of flaring demands of the respective countries vis-à-vis power sharing and economic advantage.

46. One vital challenge for the state of educational development in the 1990s will be the growing number of illiterates. One important issue in this regard is the entry of children into the pool of illiterates due mainly to non-enrolment in primary school and non-completion. The democratization of pre-university education, the intensification of adult literacy programmes and the recognition by African States of their responsibilities for the basic education of their citizens constitute the objective criteria for measuring the status of educational development in the 1990s.

47. The unequal distribution of new investments in health care, nationwide, and the exclusion of most of the population from access to the meagre services will be one of the worries of the 1990s. The assessment of priorities and the broadening of the coverage of the services are real challenges for the health sector during this decade. This goes hand-in-hand with rationalizing drug procurement, dispensing, and the use of labour in the health sector for raising efficiency while reducing costs.

48. The health threats to women's and children's lives will bring the question of primary health care (PHC) to the fore in the 1990s. The austerity measures dictated by orthodox SAPs have constrained public expenditure on drugs and medical supplies. Thus, securing budget allocation for the provision of PHC will be essential if health services are to achieve their potential contributions to improved health, productivity and development. This calls for a change in expenditures on hospital services and curative medicine to become proportionate to - or better, in favour of - that on primary health care.

49. The status of health would not be improved in the 1990s, if the 1980s standards of access to safe water, sanitation and personal hygiene were maintained. Time and effort spent on fetching and carrying water, especially by women who are the most nutritionally vulnerable, could be spent on child care, crop cultivation, food preparation, education or other activities that could improve health.

50. The looming threat of famines and food shortages has already been felt by some countries at the beginning of this decade. Even if domestic food production grew as projected, food imports would double by the end of the 1990s. Although aggregate growth in production may ensure long-run food security for the region as a whole, it may not be achieved for each country, a fact which calls for food trade within Africa. However, even if food supply improves, the distribution of income and wealth and regional concentration of production may leave large segments of society

without the purchasing power to buy enough staple food. This requires improvement in income and employment during the 1990s.

51. The unemployment problem will figure prominently during the 1990s. More than twice the current level of employment should be achieved by 2020, even if the rate of unemployment was reduced by 10 per cent and the population growth rate was slowed down to 2.75 per cent in the period 1990-2020. Thus, the creation of jobs for the rapidly expanding labour force must be a central objective.

52. The agriculture sector will continue to be a major source of new employment during this decade. However, despite the availability of potential labour-intensive activities in agriculture, such as horticulture, dairying and forestry, there are limits to the sector's capacity for labour absorption.

53. The projected annual growth of wage employment in the modern sector is very low. If reductions in public sector employment were to continue during the 1990s, based on the assumption of the sector's chronic overstaffing, unemployment will be seriously exacerbated. The choice between the economic efficiency criteria and the political economy criteria of social efficiency will, to a large extent, determine the contraction or expansion in public sector employment in the 1990s.

54. The informal sector, with its myriad of activities and services, will continue to be an important source of labour absorption in the 1990s. However, in view of the increasing number of entrants, rising competition and the lack of capital and experience on the part of newcomers, the limited capacity of the informal sector must seriously be considered.

55. Growing unemployment among youth and graduates will be a primary cause of social and political upheavals during the 1990s. The high ratio of dependency and declining incomes and real wages will prompt frustrations, amplify feelings of resentment, nurture rebellious attitudes among the unemployed population and lead to social violence and political unrest.

56. The questions of poverty alleviation and better income distribution are central to the status of social development in the 1990s. The economic crisis of the 1980s diverted attention from basic needs programmes and, therefore, the strategies of the 1990s must address two critical needs: first, how to make the poor more productive, and second, how to provide resources and productive assets to the poor, especially women. Rapid population growth during the 1990s implies that even the optimistic targets proposed for agricultural and industrial growth would leave room for only limited improvements in per capita incomes. Moreover, the increased level of domestic savings required would mean that per capita consumption would remain stagnant.

57. Given the 1980s trends in economic and social development, the vulnerability of the marginalized groups is unlikely to substantially improve in the 1990s. The potential, knowledge, skills and experiences of these groups could, in various ways, be used to enhance the process of social development during this decade. Women, for instance, are responsible for between 60 and 80 per cent of food production. Thus, any approach to the food crisis can hardly be realistic without addressing the question of women, particularly in rural areas, as a priority in the agenda for action in the 1990s. This could be realized by encouraging popular participation among women, the provision of resources and the removal of formal and legal barriers which have constrained women's effective participation in social and political life.

58. In view of the political and social turmoils in Africa and the unabated environmental degradation, the number of refugees and displaced persons will increase during the 1990s. African Governments' observance of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and their commitment to and the implementation of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation must be brought into public focus as the only viable means for the realization of a permanent resolution to these two chronic problems.

59. Given the character of the African population age structure, on the one hand, and State policies regarding wage employment, on the other, youth will remain the primary bearers of the brunt of unemployment in 1990s which means further retardation to the process of social development. Two issues are critical to the perspective situation of African youth regarding governments' awareness of the problem: first, the creation and stimulation of youth involvement in self-employment opportunities; and second, the necessity of involving youth in the design and implementation of such programmes through enhancement of popular participation.

VIII. POLICY CO-ORDINATION IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR

60. Policy co-ordination in the social sector is a prerequisite for any improvement sought in the status of social development for two reasons: (a) all social development issues reviewed in this study are interdependent and mutually reinforce each other; (b) better co-ordination of strategies and programmes would ensure a more judicious use of available resources, whether these are provided from outside or within Africa.

61. At one level, policy co-ordination is required between the various institutions of the social sector itself. Hence, a priority area for co-ordination is the focal point where the status of women, being the primary food producers, children, health and nutrition and education, interact. Family planning is, for instance, more accepted when overall mortality is relatively low and levels of education relatively high. Family planning improves maternal and child health by following the spacing of births. Similarly, clean water and sanitation produce more benefits when provided along with health education which improves hygiene and nutrition education which results in better dietary habits. Providing clean water reduces infection in children and boosts nutritional status. Healthier children are more likely to attend school and to learn than the sick and malnourished. Education, in turn, enables people to understand health problems and to act in their prevention and cure. Thus. social policy co-ordination is required between the institutions of the health and education sectors to produce educated and healthy parents who are most likely to have educated and healthy children.

62. At another level, effective social policy also calls for co-ordination between social sector institutions, on the one hand, and other national institutions at central and regional levels in each country, on the other. Policy co-ordination is essential with both central planning and economic institutions. Social sector institutions must be effectively incorporated in the central planning process to ensure a judicious balance between economic and social needs. Policies on the provision of basic needs, such as food, health, primary education and literacy should be closely co-ordinated with those pertaining to employment and income distribution, on the one hand, and the population policy regarding population structure and distribution, on the other. In other words, social development policies must be developed and maintained in complementary and mutually supportive relationship with economic policies.

63. Again, there must be constant communication and co-ordination between social sector institutions and planning economic agencies at the level of formulation and implementation of action programmes. Social policy considerations must constitute a primary component of all programmes which, for instance, address the urban-rural inequalities in national development plans. Also, social institutions must be aware of the social implications of all the proposals of economic development projects and to articulate social measures necessary to prevent, or minimize, the adverse effects of such projects.

64. The proliferation and momentum of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), both local and foreign, have been an important force in the social landscape in Africa. Social policy must therefore give due consideration to increased NGO involvement in the various areas of social development and to co-ordinate policy issues accordingly. Lack of co-ordination and the often-expressed suspicious attitudes of African Governments towards NGOs have resulted in duplication of activities, waste of financial resources and therefore retrogression in the process of social development. The prominent place which NGOs have found in international instruments and plans of action must be manifested at national levels. Areas of co-ordination between social sector institutions and NGOs should be identified for both the formulation and the implementation of sound social policies. Thus, NGOs must have access to information on social development issues and be consulted and involved in decision-making that affects their activities.

IX. MODALITIES FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION BY SOCIAL SECTOR INSTITUTIONS

65. The effective implementation of co-ordinated social policy on the part of social sector institutions calls for the initiation and pursuance of two levels of intervention. One, at macro-national level which involves the creation of institutional structures to cater for multisectoral projects in each country. The primary objective of these structures is to enhance the pursuit of democratic social development in the medium and long run. The objective of the second intervention, at a micro-sectoral level, is to redress the present situation of the most precarious social development subsectors and to ensure that areas and segments of society, previously ignored, were covered.

66. The implementation of such a strategy, beyond the national level, would require the strengthening of regional and subregional co-operation in the human development sector. The particular instrument for such co-ordination could be regional/subregional inter-agency programme development and co-ordination committees set up under the joint auspices of the OAU and ECA for integrated initiatives for the various social concerns. A number of areas can be identified for such programmes including health, literacy and adult education, child development, youth and community participation and employment. Moreover, the already existing high-level policy-making or advisory organs should be strengthened and revitalized to play a more active role in designing practical guidelines for policy implementation.

67. For effective implementation of social development policies, a deviation from the accepted vertical and compartmentalized system of addressing social issues is imperative. Thus, the realization of social policy objectives must draw upon effective community participation at the local, district and national levels. In other words, it must be based on a genuine and direct partnership between the government's social institutions and the people, through their various political and social organizations, including indigenous NGOs, at national, local and grass-root levels. NGOs have, in many instances, provided an efficient and effective alternative to public

agencies in the delivery of social programmes and projects. This implies that African Governments should sponsor the creation of an enabling environment, through democratizing and decentralizing the decision-making process, broaden their power base and vigorously support grass-roots initiatives.

68. Co-ordination between social sector institutions must be expressed in the implementation of interrelated policies and programmes through joint activities and ventures, inter-sectoral seminars, workshops and meetings. Inter-sectoral monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should also be established to ensure prompt adjustment in policies and programmes where necessary, and expansion or replication of successful experiences.

PART THREE

X. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY ACTION

69. Under the section on perspectives, some policy issues for the 1990s were highlighted. In addition, the recognition of the continent's economic and social crisis by the African States and the emerging consensus regarding their diagnosis and the prescribed solutions, leave little room for original recommendations for policy action. Thus, the vigorous pursuance and implementation of these comprehensive strategies and plans of action will result in considerable improvement in the status of social development in the 1990s. These include, the Lagos Plan of Action (1980), Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) (1985), the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD) (1986), the Regional Plan of Action on Youth (1983), the Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa (1984), the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (1985), the Charter of the Health Development of the African Region (1979), the OAU Declaration Abuja Statement (1987), the Khartoum Declaration: Towards a Human-focused Approach to Socio-economic Recovery and Development in Africa (1988), and the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (1990).

70. Thus, governments should be persuaded to display positive commitments to the articulation of the social and human dimension as an integral part of development planning and policy formulation. Thus, the plans and policies must incorporate the ethos of social development and cater for the vulnerable groups in society by promoting equity, social justice and peoples participation.

71. Research on the different aspects of social development must be encouraged by social sector institutions, by strengthening the capabilities of social research institutions and census offices as prerequisites for systematic data collection, survey and analysis of major social issues and for policy monitoring, evaluation and review.

72. Adequate budgetary allocations should be made to the social sectors regarding these as investments with multiplier effects on human development. Reforms in the educational system must emphasize the link between education on the one hand, and the socio-economic environment and production, on the other, and should introduce subjects relevant to this relationship, such as food, health, environment, drought, desertification, forestry and livestock management, etc. National efforts and regional co-operation must be co-ordinated to attain (a) universal primary education in the economically poor countries and to work out basic education programmes which do not require

satisfactory level of quality and relevance in primary education. Experiences involving the participation of families, local communities and NGOs in increasing the relevance and improving the quality of education could profitably be shared among countries. The education sector should design programmes to meet the basic learning needs of disadvantaged groups, out-of-school youth and adults with little or no access to basic learning opportunities. All partners can share their experience in designing and implementing innovative measures and activities and focus their funding on basic education on specific categories and groups (e.g., women, the rural poor, the disabled) to improve significantly the learning opportunities and conditions available for them. Health policy reforms should start with assessment of priorities regarding the orientation of the public health system and the need to broaden the coverage of services to reach the majority of the population who live in remote rural areas. The expansion in primary health care which calls for the effective participation of the community is the only alternative to expensive curative health care. The health sector institutions must closely co-ordinate with the NGOs working in the field of primary health care. Communities must also be consulted and encouraged to participate in setting their own priorities and in the design and delivery of health care programmes.

73. The health sector should embark on massive campaigns to inform the public, particularly women, of the importance of balanced diets, the value of breast-feeding and young children's needs at weaning and beyond. Besides better information, other supports will be needed such as energy-dense food for children to make extra meals unnecessary and time-saving devices for women. The health sector should also launch direct feeding programmes for malnourished children. One of the major priorities of the 1990s has to be the transformation of the African agriculture sector to improve food security and usher in fundamental development process.

74. Given the squeeze in modern sector wage-employment and the limited prospects for large-scale labour-intensive industries, governments must stimulate employment in medium-scale firms by encouraging investment in simple manufacturing such as furniture, clothing and household goods.

75. Governments must also tap the employment potential of agriculture, especially in labour-intensive activities such as horticulture, dairying and forestry. Equally, efforts must be expended to stimulate urban informal employment opportunities by creating a conducive environment for the proliferation of self-employment and income-generating prospects.

76. Wage legislation must be adjusted to be commensurate with rising inflation and prices of basic consumption goods on the one hand, and the decline in real wages and incomes on the other. This should simultaneously take place with the formulation of systematic retirement policies that would guarantee after-service social security.

77. To mitigate the increasing burden of unemployment and the retrenchment of workers on the ailing family-based social security arrangements, policy action is needed to assist the unemployed and retrenched workers through (a) creating machineries to promote the advancement of women and youth, (b) job training and placement of retrenched workers, (c) initiation of labour-intensive public works programmes, credit, and income-generating schemes for women and small farmers in the most disadvantaged areas, and (d) the formulation of apprenticeship programmes for training and support services for self-employment.

78. Education programmes for women and girls should be designed to eliminate the social and cultural barriers which have discouraged, or even excluded, women and girls from the benefits of regular education programmes as well as to promote equal opportunities in all aspects of their lives.

79. The plight of the refugees and displaced persons could only be permanently resolved if African Governments pursued policies that would ensure (a) equal development of the different regions of each country, (b) equitable distribution of national wealth, (c) equal share in the political power of the various socio-economic and ethnic groups in the society.

80. Since problems of refugees cannot be confined to national boundaries, a subregional and regional approach should be adopted towards confronting them. Host countries and refugee-sending countries must co-operate in undertaking development-oriented projects to make refugees productive and useful to their host countries, as well as to their home countries, upon their repatriation.

81. Youth should be considered as one of the most important target groups of an employment-oriented and equitable development strategy. Thus, social policy action must focus on growing youth unemployment. Special efforts must be made to integrate the youth, often raised in poverty, into the economic life by breaking the cycle of dependence and providing training opportunities. Much attention should be given to youth training, enlisting the assistance of both official and voluntary organizations. Moreover, training programmes should be designed in such a way as to promote youth participatory activities.

82. In view of the growing strain on poor families and the adoption of various survival strategies in response to economic pressures, policy support should unreservedly be extended to those survival strategies emphasizing the growth of employment and productivity of small-scale informal sector manufacturing; support to communities for self-production and exchange of food, shelter, and community-based services; and increasing communal efforts in basic needs.

XI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

83. The first part of this study reviewed the status of social development in Africa in the 1980s, by highlighting the main features of this development, within the context of a persistent and pervasive socio-economic crisis witnessed by the continent, especially during the past decade. Thus, while the continent did in fact have to contend with formidable problems, it also registered respected, though erratic, growth rates in output as well as advances in education, health and other social sectors. However, this development was short-lived and was soon stunted. Due to a number of factors, the economic scene began to display disturbing signs so that by the end of the 1980s it had already become customary to talk of a crisis. By the mid-1980s, internal natural and man-made disasters, coupled with the world economic recession, interplayed to shutter the expectations and frustrate the hopes of the immediate post-independence period.

84. African Governments responded to the crisis by resorting to stringent financial measures under the IMF/World Bank-sponsored SAPs: these have been traumatic for the process of social development in Africa. Thus, the 1980s saw a steady deterioration in the social conditions of most African populations and witnessed a reversal in the trends of social advancement that had been achieved during the first one and a half decades of independence.

85. Recognizing the magnitude of the African crisis, African Governments, regional organizations and the United Nations specialized organs have made commendable efforts to find

concrete solutions. Thus, comprehensive strategies and plans of action on especial issues, have been formulated since 1980. Though, the areas identified by these documents for priority action reflected an awareness of the social dimension of the crisis, there is overriding pre-occupation with economic issues at the expense of social concerns which had to await the Khartoum Declaration: Towards a Human-focused Approach to Socio-economic Recovery and Development in Africa, to underline the centrality of the human dimension in the recovery and development process. Again, the African Alternative to Structural Adjustment Programmes (AAF-SAP) was formulated in 1989 to redress the conventional programmes adverse consequences on the continent's process of social development.

86. The study, in its second part, has noted that any considerable improvements sought in the status of social development during the 1990s are contingent on African Governments implementation of the various strategies and plans of action to which they had already committed themselves. However, a clearer articulation of the concept of social development and its elevation to a central place in these strategies and plans of action is imperative.

87. To this effect, the study has firmly stressed the necessity for policy co-ordination between the various social sector institutions at national, regional and subregional levels, for a more effective implementation of social policies. The study has also called for the need for co-ordination between the social sector institutions, on the one hard, and the national planning and economic agencies, on the other.

88. The study, in its third part, has acknowledged that the recommendations contained in the African strategies for recovery and plans of action leave little room for originality in this regard. However, a number of recommendations for policy and practical action on the different aspects of social development were highlighted.